

SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals Upon Current Topics—Compiled Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

RESULT OF THE VIRGINIA ELECTION.

From the N. Y. World.

In the election on Tuesday, which resulted in the signal overthrow of the radical party in Virginia, the Democrats of that State acted a part which will expose them to the censure of their brethren elsewhere as think it an abandonment, or, at least, a compromise, of principle to forego a vigorous opposition to negro voting. The Virginia Democrats formed an alliance, for this election, with a bolting section of the Republicans. For the sake of accomplishing their objects, deemed of more importance, they abandoned in the bestowal of suffrage upon the negroes at a time when the very question was to be decided by the adoption or rejection of a State constitution proposing to confer the privilege. The Democrats of Virginia might, had they so chosen, have acted by themselves, and have recorded their indignant protest against the participation of the negroes in the politics of the State. Instead of this, they judged it wiser to withdraw all further opposition to negro suffrage while the question was yet undecided, and co-operate with the conservative Republicans in restoring the State from the control of the radicals. Whether this action was wise and sagacious is a question which challenges the consideration of Democrats in all parts of the country. We do not understand that the Democrats of Virginia intended to abandon any principle or renounce any opinion which they have heretofore held. They think of negro suffrage as they have always thought; deeming it unwise, inexpedient, and fraught with danger to the State. But, on the other hand, they knew that, do what they would, they could not prevent it; and they asked themselves what they would gain by a futile and impotent protest of which the only effect would be to surrender the State to the control of the radicals and negroes. Without confessing any change of opinion, they consented to waive the question of negro suffrage, to accept a State Constitution which made the negroes all voters, and to form a coalition which, if successful, would nullify, at least for the present, the calamitous consequences of negro voting. The coalition has been successful, and the government of the State is rescued from the radicals and negroes and placed in conservative hands. Negro suffrage can work no great evil so long as the negroes and their radical confederates are outvoted. The important question is not, Who votes? but, Who are a majority? If the negroes and their allies were a majority they would control the government of the State; but the Democrats and their allies being a majority, they control the State, and the negroes have no more effective power than if they did not vote at all. The practical question for the Virginia Democrats was not whether the negroes should vote—for they had no power to prevent that; but whether the negroes or the Democrats should be on the side of the majority. By standing out against negro suffrage, the Democrats would have made a futile show of consistency, and have lost all real power; by forbearing further resistance to negro suffrage and making an alliance against the radicals they have gained a practical control and ascendancy in the government of the State. Governor Walker and his Republican supporters have severed themselves as effectually from the radicals as if they had joined the Democratic party. If Walker ever expects to be re-elected, if he and his Republican friends have any future political aspirations, they know that it is only by the aid of the Democrats who have been their allies now that they can expect to succeed. Being thus dependent on Democratic support, they will be amenable to Democratic advice. It is evident enough, therefore, that, by practically accepting negro suffrage, the Virginia Democrats have nullified and destroyed negro influence. They have lifted themselves from the position of an isolated and impotent minority to one of commanding power. They are a majority of the party that controls the politics of the State; whereas by pursuing a different course they would have surrendered this advantage to the negroes. They have a governor who cannot disregard their wishes; a legislature that will elect two United States Senators not unacceptable to them; and Virginia will be represented in the lower branch of Congress by conservative members. To gain these great advantages the Virginia Democrats have made no real sacrifice, for negro suffrage could not have been prevented if they had opposed it ever so stoutly.

Lords, and the presumption now is that it will be passed in time enough to allow Lords and honorable gentlemen to go to their shooting quarters early in August. This Irish Church bill is one of the great facts of modern times. Nothing in these late years—not the Pacific Railroad, which is finished, nor the Suez Canal, which is not finished—reveals in so remarkable a manner the progressive character of this age. It is a sign, sufficient to give fame to a century, to see the descendants of the proud old Norman barons deliberately striking at the foundations on which for so many ages they have so securely rested. This is what we now see: for the pillars of a privileged Church and the pillars of a privileged aristocracy are one and the same. The Protestant Ecclesiastical Establishment of Ireland, which has lasted for more than three hundred years, may now be considered at an end. The axe has been laid to the root of the tree somewhat unsparringly; but, away from those more or less directly interested, no one regrets its fall. Throughout its entire history it has been a barren tree, offensively encumbering the ground, and Ireland and the world are well rid of it. But the fate of the Irish Church establishes a dangerous precedent. It proves that disestablishment and disendowment are possible. We may take it for granted that the Liberation Society, which has for its object the "liberation of the Church from State patronage and control," and which for so many years has seemed to labor in vain, now feels that toil and expense have been amply rewarded. We may also take it for granted that they will not slacken their endeavors. The fight which has been fought in Ireland has to be fought over again in Scotland and in England. The fight, in truth, is already beginning in Scotland. The two largest dissenting bodies, the United Presbyterian Church and Free Church, like our Old and New School Churches, are making arrangements for union. The United Church will represent very nearly two-thirds of the population of the country. Such a Church flourishing on the voluntary support of the people will be a dangerous rival to the Scottish establishment. The leaders of the establishment have already taken a complaint to the intelligence has just reached us that a deputation has waited upon the Prime Minister asking him to lend his powerful help in abolishing lay patronage and otherwise bringing the Church into harmony with the times—their object being to prevent this threatened union by thus opening the door of the establishment to the Free Church brethren. We have no idea that this artifice can succeed. The fact, however, is interesting, as it shows that the combatants are already preparing for battle. Ten years hence, and it will not be wonderful if the Scottish establishment shall have gone the way of its sister of Ireland. It is at least certain that the forces which have worked so well in Ireland will forthwith be applied in Scotland, and with even greater prospects of success. The English establishment is stronger, richer, more effectually interwoven with the constitution. It will, in consequence, be more difficult to overturn. But it, too, must perish.

The sentence has gone forth against ecclesiastical establishments, and sooner or later the Church of England must fall. The contagion will spread the world over, and religion, if it is to live and thrive, must live and thrive in the hearts of men, and by means of their voluntary givings. Patronage, State support, and forced contributions have had their day. We cannot look at this Church question, which must more and more distract the nations, without paying a compliment to the wisdom and foresight of the founders of this republic. Our history will reveal no such ecclesiastical warfare. Under the broad banner of the republic all religions are tolerated and all religious property is protected. The churches fear no frown; they look for no favor. It is not unnatural for us to feel proud when we see our example coming into universal favor.

PROGRESS OF THE NATION. From the N. Y. Tribune. The approach of the ninth national census may well excite solicitude concerning the extent to which its results will be affected by the extraordinary causes that have distracted the country during one-half of the current decade. The effects of such a war as we have encountered, including the premature loss of nearly a million of men, may well be expected to affect the ratio of comparison with the enumerations of other decades, past and prospective. Yet such is the steady effect of emigration and other recuperating causes, that the drawbacks, however mighty they seem in comparison with any former difficulties, will probably leave much fainter effects on the census than many of us have at times anticipated. It is not very wonderful that Americans should become believers in "manifest destiny," when thinking of the progress of their country during the brief period of our national existence. How could it be otherwise, when recollecting that the four-score years since the original rickety Confederacy of ill-jointed States was merged in a national Government under the present Constitution, have been signalized by increase of States from thirteen to thirty-seven, with territory enough to make out fifty noble commonwealths ere this century ends; with a population, forty millions now, that will probably be expanded to a round hundred millions before the year 1900; with possessions expanded from the original narrow strip along the Atlantic coast into a mighty empire, stretching like thousand miles across the continent to the Pacific Ocean, and upward from the Mexican Gulf to the Northern lakes and the arctic regions of Alaska? Nearly fifty thousand miles of railroad have brought all sections of the Union into quicker communion than existed between Boston and Washington when the present National Constitution was established, while more than a hundred and fifty thousand miles of telegraph enable widely separated States and people to interchange intelligence more rapidly than could have been done thirty years ago. The towns of a single county, the news from all parts of the nation now appearing as promptly in our daily papers as the "local items" from the different wards of the city. The means thus effective in satisfying the wants and promoting the comforts of social and civil life are equally efficacious for national defense—the movement of armies across our vast regions being regulated and facilitated by the locomotive and the lightning—and all danger of invasion being averted by the fact that the telegraphs and the railroads enable us promptly to concentrate volunteer enough to overwhelm all the armies which the world could send against our national Union. What vistas of national greatness burst upon the mind when contemplating the future! By the usual rate of increase, the population of our country, estimated at forty-two millions in 1870, fifty-six millions in 1880, seventy-seven millions in 1890, and a hundred millions in 1900, will probably exceed three hundred millions in 1940—seventy years from the present time—a period that will be reached by many of the children now in our schools. And yet this National Union would not then contain, proportionately, more than half as much population as Massachusetts now possesses. State in the ratio on, if peopled like that since the whole Union, it would contain over six hundred millions. With the country that we possess more than three and a half millions of square miles of land, or about twenty-two hundred millions of acres, or nearly an acre for every dollar of national debt; and with the probability that the lapse of twenty-five years will nearly double the number of our present population, who can despair of the Republic, or of its means to repay, in reasonable time, every dollar of the debt incurred for preserving our National Union?

THE RESULT IN VIRGINIA. From the N. Y. Times. Virginia has vindicated the wisdom of the policy proposed by General Grant and sanctioned by Congress in restoring reconstruction to the State. The original is all but ended, and the title of Virginia to take its place among the reconstructed States as a member of the Union is practically established. The details of Tuesday's election which remain to be furnished will not affect the general result. By faithful compliance with the law the State has emancipated itself from military rule. It has established its right to self-government by fulfilling literally the conditions devised by Congress in a manner prescribed by the President. A Constitution which, with many faults, brings the government of the State into harmony with Federal policy, has been ratified. The provisions by which selfish adventurers sought to control local affairs by imposing disabilities upon the worthiest citizens have been voted down. Negro enfranchisement is complete, and the only disability borne by white men is that which operates under the fourteenth amendment. A State ticket has been elected which represents the character, the intelligence, the wealth, and enterprise of the people, as distinguished from organized ignorance and viciousness. And a legislature has been chosen, whose members, eligible under the law, are prepared to finish the allotted task by ratifying the pending constitutional amendment. A result in all respects satisfactory is thus assured. The end has not been attained without much painful and suggestive experience. There has been delay, which the Virginians were not able to correct, but for the consequences of which they have been held responsible. They made earnest and honest efforts in 1865 to bring back the State to the Union on what were then considered the required terms. In October of that year men were elected to Congress who had been known throughout the contest as *quasi* Unionists; but Congress denied their admission and demanded fresh guarantees. The reaction throughout the South was instant and not unanticipated, and Virginia shared it fully. A policy of masterly inactivity was adopted, and native Virginians of character and influence, retiring from all participation in public affairs, took the body of the people with them, leaving the State in the hands of adventurers, whose sole idea of the use of government was to retain the power anarchy and proscription. Ignoring the general welfare and considering only themselves, they sought to enfranchise all who were sure to vote against them, and were thus guilty of the criminal folly of attempting to found a free government in which only a fraction of the governed had a voice. The Underwood constitution of 1867 rested upon these sinister and intolerant ideas. It aimed at the incorporation of proscription as an element of the organic law, and the transfer of all State authority to the ignorant and worthless portion of the population. It was a contrivance for securing State authority in hands least fitted to use it

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THE IRISH CHURCH BILL. From the N. Y. Herald. On Tuesday evening, in the House of Lords, the Irish Church bill having been in a few particulars slightly altered, passed the committee. In its amended form the bill will, without delay, be read a third time in the Lords, and sent down to the Commons for approval. It is not our opinion that the Commons will accept all the amendments, for the alterations made by the Lords are not numerous, some of them seriously affect the principles on which the measure as a whole is based. It will not be difficult, however, for the Commons so to modify the bill as to put an end to further opposition. In a few weeks at most the bill will be back again in the

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